[216 cont.]

771 Chinese civilization, which with agriculture also brought corre-
174 sponding religious customs with it, passed over them, even if it has only slightly penetrated into the religion.

771 This peculiar position, conditioned by history and en-
792 vironment, makes the religion of the Tujen a significant subject
174 in the religious history of Amdo and of the Chinese border region generally, so that it is actually no longer simply a matter of the religion of the Tujen alone. The Tujen monks seem to have been aware of this advantageous position and have actively taken part in the investigation of the forms of belief of the border land, especially that of Lamaism. Through this they have won a certain learned and religio-political influence. An example of this is given by Cybikov in his introduction to the "Lam rim c'en po" (pp. XVI-XVII, translated by W.A.Unkrig), where he speaks of the Ch'ang-chia hutukhtu, who, as is known, comes from the Tujen lamasery Erh-ku-lung: "But whatever the situation may be. The home of the Ch'ang-ch'a hutukhtus occupies such a position between China, Mongolia, the East Tibetans, the Tangut, and formerly also the Uigur, that it had to serve as an arena for the contact between these peoples and for the formation of a tribe in which is embodied the traits of all four of these peoples. If one takes a look at the present-day situation exclusively, without historical considerations, according to our view it has contributed greatly to the fact that these lamas had to gain enormous influence on Tibetan and Mongolic affairs and on the relationship of these peoples to the Manchu dynasty." I found this confirmed when I visited the lamasery there. If we also disregard the observation of Cybikov concerning the ethnic formation of the Tujen, it must nevertheless be admitted that this people has taken over many religious traits from its neighbors. It is therefore also no accident that it was precisely a Tulku (Tuguän
● [538] hutukhtu) from the Tujen monastery [217] who in the eighteenth century wrote the only known Tibetan book about all the Tibetan sects, including the Bon. He had the most varied forms constantly and directly before his eyes, just as even today the religious customs of the Tujen still represent a living catalogue of patterns in this respect.

[217 cont.]

771 Now, concerning the elements which make up these
174 customs, they fall almost entirely into four groups, each of which constitutes a special layer. These four layers are: the belief in a supreme god, shamanism, the Bon religion, and Lamaism. The layers, however, cannot simply be taken out of the whole structure, freed from all the extra features, and connected with a larger pervading stratum of the Central Asiatic religions. This is only possible in a larger context and would go beyond the bounds of this work, for the parts in question are of considerable temporal depth and embrace many peoples. In addition these layers have interpenetrated one another in that in each case the later one has absorbed the elements of the preceding ones. Thus, Lamaism, in spite of its original enmity toward the Bon religion, has nonetheless adopted much from it. The Bon faith, on the other hand, in turn has a strong shamanistic base, and an old sky-cult runs through all the layers.

771 A discussion of the two high religions, of the Bon and of
128 Lamaism, in their connection with the belief of the Tujen would
756 go too far. Shamanism can more readily be delimited, but it cannot be exhaustively presented either. So there remains the old sky-cult as a belief in a supreme god. This will be dealt with quite extensively in the following, whereas in the case of shamanism the presentation must be limited to a theoretical sketch. A special work will deal with it in detail for the whole western Chinese border region. The Bon religion and Lamaism will only be touched upon briefly.

II. The Layers of the Tujen Religion

1. The Belief in a Supreme God

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In this section it is necessary to refer not only to the customs but also to the other sources and the scanty literature. Aside from the DMF and Mariage (by Schram), which offer a sparse yield for the religion, the other sources are still unpublished.
• [538] They are available in the original texts, however. These are the Geser legend, the agriculture legend, the Moschus deer (the first part of the song cycle known under the name xoni, sheep), and a series of other songs and fairy tales, of which the wedding songs are appearing (Folklore Studies, Tokyo, 1952).

[224 cont.]

782 174 as a combination of a primitial offering with the matutinal incense offering. Even these gifts, however, may not have a bad odor, which wholly corresponds with the original meaning of the incense offering. 2. The incense offering, according to these texts, is already very ancient. Even if the legends are distressingly embellished from Lamaism, they nonetheless go [773] back to pre-Buddhist conditions. This applies especially to the Geser legend. Lamaistic monks in Kumbum emphasize that the legend has nothing to do with their religion. In similar 782 fashion this type of incense offering is declared to be pre- 174 Buddhistic in western Tibet; cf. A. H. Francke, Tibetische 171 Hochzeitslieder, pp. 25 f. (Darmstadt, 1923). The pre-Buddhistic occurrence among the ancient Mongols has already been mentioned. The Tujen are of Mongolic derivation, and they also have religious links with the pre-Buddhist Tibetans, as is shown in the wedding customs and songs (6). -- How far the

6. For the distribution of the incense offering, see Anthropos, 47, 1952, p. 49 [pp. 80-81 above in the HRAF translation]. Its occurrence in ancient China also argues in favor of its being pre-Buddhist in character; cf. Jen Nai-Ch'iang-Schröder, Die Fandse, p. 183, where the ancient Chinese burnt offering is equated with the incense offering of the Fandse. The Na-khi juniper incense offering, whose great similarity with the incense offering of the Tujen and the Tibetans cannot be denied, is also pre-Buddhist; cf. the descriptions by J. F. Rock, Naga Cult, pp. 230 ff., and Muan Bpö, pp. 18, 34.

782 incense offering goes back is indicated by the hunting song cycle. 174 It was probably already practiced in the early period of a hunting [538] culture and from there passed into the herding culture. It is

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

the temple of T'ieh-fu-ssu, 40 *li* west of Hsining in 1537 (ch. 31, p. 15*a*). 175 792 346

The information in the *Annals* is restricted to these five poor items. Huth notes[51] that the Third Dalai Lama, Sod-nam, on his way to Ordos in 1582, went from Kukunor to Kumbum and established a college there for the explanation of sacred texts. From Kumbum he went to Ribo-nan-tig (probably the hermitage of Dantig noted on pp. 31 *sq.*), to take a long rest; then, after visiting many big lamaseries, he arrived in the Ordos. I am unable to identify the names of the lamaseries noted here, and am very sceptical about these "big" monasteries, because no ruins, vestiges or traditions of them are preserved. The big monasteries of Huang-chung which have to be studied, were all built in more recent times. The historical data are again very scanty.

CH'Ü-T'AN-SSU, FIRST LAMASERY BUILT DURING THE MING DYNASTY

The first lamasery built during the Ming, according to the *Annals* (ch. 15, pp. 7*b* and 8*a*), is the famous monastery of Ch'ü-t'an.[52] The history of this first lamasery, built by the Ming emperors, is preserved in broad strokes in the text (*Annals* of Hsining, ch. 32, pp. 16–20) of three steles, now demolished. All three give evidence of the high consideration of the emperors for Lamaism.

The first text was granted by Emperor T'ai-tsung (Ch'eng-tsu) of the Yung-lo period (1403–1424), and concerns a "golden" (bronze) statue offered to the lamasery by the emperor. The text notes that the artisans, not succeeding in preparing the mold for the statue, went to eat their meal. While they were gone the mold grew into perfect shape of its own accord. The statue was cast from it and exuded a wonderful perfume.

The second text was granted by Emperor Jen-tsung of the Hung-hsi period (1425). It recalls the merits of Emperor T'ai-tsu of the Hung-wu period (1368–1399), who founded the monastery, ordered the building of a temple, and granted the name of "Ch'ü-t'an," and of Emperor T'ai-tsung who ordered the construction of a second temple.

The third text, granted by Emperor Hsüan-tsung of the Hsüan-te period (1426–1436), ordered the construction of a third temple, after recalling summarily the history of the lama, San-la, and his tribe, and the grant of the monastery and its title.

Legends

The origin of the celebrated monastery is overlaid with a wonderful legend, believed and enjoyed by the people. It should first be remembered that Emperor 538

[51] Huth, *op. cit.* 2: 227.

[52] Ch'ü-t'an-Gautama, a name of Shakyamuni, means "most victorious on earth."

[p. 21(B)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

T'ai-tsu of the Ming dynasty designated his grandson, 538
Hui-ti, to succeed to the throne in 1399. After three years, his uncle Ch'eng-tsu (Yung-lo period), usurped the throne and Hui-ti perished in a conflagration of the palace. A note added in the history states that it is related that Hui-ti escaped, disguised as a lama, and wandered incognito from monastery to monastery in Yunnan and south China; that he finally returned to Peking in 1440, and died after revealing his identity. This topic seems to be the basis for the legends concerning Ch'ü-t'an. However an "historical" fact may well have provided the fabric from which was woven the legend elaborated by the lamas, since the fact concerns the very province of Kansu.

At the time of the collapse of the Sung dynasty in 1276, the last emperor, Chao-hsien, was made prisoner by the Mongol conquerors in Hang-chou and the Chinese imperial harem was transferred to the north. In 1288 the imperial prisoner was sent (banished) to Kansu (Ho-hsi) in order to study Tibetan sutras. In Kansu he became a lama monk and adopted the religious name of Ho-tsun (mKha-'bcum). He died in 1323 in Kansu, a century before the founding of Ch'ü-t'an.

During the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) Chinese scholars liked to gossip about the possible Chinese origin of the Mongol emperor, Shun-ti,[53] as well as the possible Mongol origin of the Ming emperor, Ch'eng-tsu (Yung-lo period). These tales are well known among the lamas and the Monguors.

A lama, honored for his holiness, lived in secluded 539
retirement on a high mountain near Ch'ü-t'an. He left for Peking one July carrying a small pack held by a light wooden frame, on his back. The heat was tropical and the holy man threw his mantle in the air, where it remained floating over his head protecting him the whole long way, even in the streets of Peking. Emperor Hui-ti, seeing the miracle, renounced his throne, left the palace and harem, and followed the returning holyman to Ch'ü-t'an with two of his ministers and his two brothers, all of whom became lamas.

At first the emperor resided at the very small monastery of Hung-shan-ssu, 60 *li* south of Ch'ü-t'an. He sent his cattle and horses to the pastures of Yao-ts'ao-t'ai and went to Ch'ü-t'an. There he planted his stick at a certain spot and suddenly it turned into a blossoming sandalwood tree; whereupon he decided to build a monastery and a temple around the tree. A dry tree is still shown inside the temple, adorned with ceremonial scarves offered by the worshipping people who pass under its branches in order to receive blessings. Three small trees outside the temple are said to have sprouted from the dry tree.

The emperor had a well dug to be used for watering his horses. A small lama boy, while drawing water, fell

[53] P. Pelliot, L'Edition collective des œuvres de Wang Kouo-wei, *T'oung Pao*, 26: 136, 1926.

[p.22(A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

into the well and disappeared. Only his clothes were seen in the river with which the well was connected underground. The emperor ordered the well to be filled and had a beautiful tower built over it. The ruins of the tower are still shown to visitors. 539

There are displayed in the head temple three fine saddles of unusually large size, with stirrups twice as large as those used today, for in former times people of note were taller, bigger, and stronger. The saddles are said to have belonged to the emperor and his brothers. When the emperor died his two ministers, in fear of having their families exterminated, changed their names. The first adopted the name of Chen Lo-kang, and his descendants still live in the Kang-tse Valley near Nien-pei. The other adopted the name of Yang Kang-tsun; his descendants live in Chen fan Valley. 538

The emperor appointed a member of the imperial family to manage the lamasery. He was called T'ien-hu-chün, and his name was Chu, the name of the imperial family. The appointment was hereditary and the emperor had carved on a slab the provisions concerning the appointment. The descendant of Mr. Chu presided over the ceremony of theatrical representations on New Year's. Later on, a corrupt descendant, after using the revenues and land taxes of the monastery for himself, was killed by the lamas, and the slab was smashed. The plinth which supported the slab is still shown to visitors.

Inside the courtyard of the enormous temple are the ruins of four beautiful stupas built by the Emperor. At the base of each he had buried, at night, immense treasures. One of the previous incarnations of the Living Buddha dug up the treasure from one of the stupas at night and took it to his residential quarters; but within a few moments his palace vanished in a blaze. Since that time, no one has dared to try to remove the treasures.

Upon his death, the emperor was buried in the lamasery. However, the lamas of Hung-shan-ssu claim that the emperor died and was buried in their monastery, and they have the visitor admire their own ruined tower built over a well and their own old dry tree enclosed in their temple. These honored trees, enclosed by a temple, point to the tree of Kumbum which sprouted from the afterbirth of Tsong khapa buried in Kumbum, even as the small trees sprouted from the roots of the old dry one. The tower built on the well points to the stupa of Kumbum, said to be the first monument built at Kumbum. It is hard to say which of these legends is the oldest.[54]

Temples and History of the Lamasery

Inside an enormous rectangular courtyard are three temple halls built in a row; a wall encloses the court- 792 346

[54] In Kumbum in 1577 there was built a temple enclosing the celebrated tree which was at that time 223 years old.

[p.22(B)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

thanksgiving for the honor bestowed upon the family. Some time later, the nephew of T'u-kuan, of the Ts'e-bdurk family became the reincarnation of the Living Buddha of Labrang, the most intimate friend of T'u-kuan for many generations. It was T'u-kuan who, in Peking, obtained the title of Erdeni Nomun-khan for the Living Buddha of Labrang.[23] After the death of the Living Buddha of Labrang, T'u-kuan is invited to cast the horoscope in order to indicate the place where the reincarnation of his friend will occur, and *vice versa*.

SEARCH FOR THE INCARNATION

This problem has been dealt with by many authors. Therefore, only data concerning Huang-chung will here be recorded, because they may help to reveal the social psychology of the Monguor lamas and of the Monguors. Upon the death of one of the great Living Buddhas of Huang-chung, the Dalai Lama is invited to cast the horoscope indicating the place of rebirth. Usually two or three boys seem to fulfill the requirements. Their names are sent to Peking and put in the traditional urn, according to the protocol established by imperial edict in 1793,[24] from which one is then drawn. The name drawn is supposed to be that of the genuine incarnation. For minor Living Buddhas, another Living Buddha is requested to render the service.

Usually the place of rebirth is indicated in terms as vague as the oracle of Delphi, and lamas go to find the candidate, but old lamas have admitted to me confidentially that soon after the death of a Living Buddha some lamas of the intendancy are sent to investigate where children were born around that time, and in what wealthy family, and actually it is usually one or two years before the horoscope is cast. Sometimes the horoscope is so vague that it is many years before the boy is found. The rebirth of Achia of Kumbum who died tragically in 1909 was found after six years, and two boys fitted the requirements. The two names were sent to Peking, and one was chosen. At that time the lamas of Kumbum were in a hurry, fearing that Achia would no longer reincarnate because of the fateful circumstances of his death. When the boy is found, lamas have him select from among several items displayed (beads, cups, etc.) the things he used in his previous existences. This is performed in the presence of lamas only.

Wonderful legends are told about the reincarnations of Erh-ku-lung. T'u-kuan, bent with age, went on foot to Peking, incognito, in order to heap up piles of merit. At night, in Lien-ch'eng, a good but poor lady prepared his food, and in the morning when he left she offered him her last piece of brick tea. T'u-kuan died in Peking and was reborn in the child to which the poor but charitable lady gave birth. It was her reward.

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[23] Huth, *op. cit.*, 288.

[24] W. W. Rockhill, The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa, *T'oung pao* 9 (1): 55, March, 1910.

[p.67(A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

A lot of anecdotes, overlaid with fabulous legends, are told about powerful shamans who lived in former times. A famous shaman of Too long was invited to cure a dying man. The man died before his arrival. The soul of the shaman, after the completion of certain rites, went to see Erlik Khan, the King of Hell, and examining the files he found that the man had died several years before his destined time. The soul of the shaman came back; he performed a set of new rites and the man came to life and lived for several more years. I wondered how such anecdotes, known all over Asia, were spread among the Monguors. The overall conclusion, after all the talks about old famous shamans, was always: "We no longer have the stuff of which shamans are made, for the apprentices are no longer trained in the right way."

MONGUOR SHAMANS AND NEUROSIS

What about the general statement of the ethnologists that shamans are victims of neurosis? It is said of the brutal training of the apprentices among the nomads, in opposition to the most elementary principles of pedagogy, that nothing could have been devised, better calculated to unseat the reason and to form pitiable neurotics of them.

In former times, according to the Monguors, the training of the Monguor shamans must have been very similar. The recent cases of the two apprentices of the old Lu shaman seem to evidence this assumption. On the other hand, it is a known fact that among the hereditary diseases neurosis is the most frequently inherited. Because children of shamans must marry children of shamans, the danger of inheritance is increased and it creates a predisposition to produce more easily suggestions and hallucinations among the members of such families. The fact of the suicide of the boy No, unwilling to become a shaman, is suggestive. It seems, therefore, not too far fetched to suppose that the shamans and their apprentices easily get the conviction of seeing spirits and hearing them talk. Because they will see and hear them, they act accordingly, notwithstanding their actual superficial training. On the other hand, for neurosis, as for all diseases, the question of plus and minus is always open, but the morbid basis of the disease is always existent.

Some of the shamans performing the rites seem to act as though in a play, straining for effects. They give the profession a black eye, while others seem to mean business and to act as real shamans. After all, the fact remains that shamans never dare to quit the profession, notwithstanding that it is a poor means of livelihood.

SHAMAN DRESS AND IMPLEMENTS

DRESSES

The shaman when not performing rites for communities or private families, dresses in the same way as the Monguors, but while acting as shaman he wears a special

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4: Schram M-S (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

swer: the galaxy. Who walks on the milky way? Yu Huang,[7] preceded by the green dragon and the White Tiger. Under the bridge is there still another bridge or not? The dangerous bridge leading to Hell, over which passes the king of Hell, Erlik, preceded by the spirit with the head of a cow and the spirit with the head of a horse, and where spirits are waiting, who devour passing souls. What is our bridge? The bridge of the spirits.

The building of the bridge of the spirits and the confused explanations of the shamans, mixed with Taoist, shamanist, and Bŏn principles, reveals, nevertheless, the philosophy claiming the existence of three worlds: the upper, middle, and lower worlds, each with its own population.[8] A hint has already been given of this philosophy, in describing the rite of the stretched goat skin and the molding of clay figures, etc. At any rate the bridge provides a wonderful opportunity for the shamans to display their philosophical abilities and their proficiency in the art of telling of the nine and more heavens, one more beautiful than the other; the eighteen hells, dark and terrifying; the severe judgments after death presided over by Erlik or the Chinese Yen wang; the explanation of the three souls; shamans flying on drums to heaven, are unique occasions for story-tellers, sparkling with wit, to reap big successes.

At that time, shamans never fail to explain the appointment of their ancestor shaman by Chiang Tze-ya as servant of the god of the Five Roads; they never fail to narrate captivating episodes from the epic of Gesar. All kinds of problems are dealt with, and a lot of fun is had. The most ridiculous answers are given to the most ridiculous questions. One shaman asks for the explanation of why in each wheat grain there is always a small groove? The answer is that in the beginning of the world there was no wheat. Tengri made a wheat grain, but it seemed to be too big; with the nail of his right thumb he parted the grain in two parts. Still it seemed to be too big, and so he parted it again and then a third time. The fourth time, just when he was about to cut the grain in two parts again, it appeared to be all right without cutting through it, so he left the grain only half cut through, and so all grains of wheat have a little groove in them. This story was told to me several times by children who attended the meeting and said that the shaman told them so.

Another story, which gives us a better insight into the nature of that kind of meeting, is told when a shaman is asked at what time and why men started seducing women, and women started eloping? An interesting sociological and moral question! Tengri wanted to have men and women. After kneading red earth and water a whole day, he moulded seven men; then he

[7] The most popular god of modern China who received letters patent from the Emperor in A.D. 1017. Wieger, *Textes historiques*, *op. cit.*, 1846.

[8] Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, 138. Shirokogoroff, *op. cit.*, 125.

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4: Schram M-S (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

directors of the exercises, and their stock of punishments for injustices never seemed to be exhausted. People who committed injustices had to repair their faults by being a servant, in their future life, of the person who had suffered on their account, or of being reborn as a donkey, a horse, or an ox, plowing their fields, carrying fertilizer, or harvesting. Even the slightest injustices are not overlooked by the terrible judge, for in order to repair the smallest injustices he makes men and women transmigrate into a hen, laying eggs for years, in behalf of the person who suffered because of them. The topic of reparation for injustices seemed to be an obsession of all the preachers, who seldom hinted at other questions of morals, and so the feeling concerning the widespread rite of repairing injustices, among laymen as well as lamas, and even Hutukhtus, becomes understandable. Never did they hint at the shamanist rites performed in private families.

The topic of the old Li, concerning gentle behavior with animals, was the delight of the fasters, who every year asked him to tell again the marvelous anecdotes he had stored in his repertory concerning the subject, for in his lively telling even old chestnuts took on a new glow. The keen interest of nomads in their animals is a matter of common knowledge. Since the Monguors still love their animals in the way of their ancestors, it is no wonder that they asked for that topic, and that they adored the old Li, whose talks hit straight at their hearts. Below are some of his well-known examples.

In India, an old Living Buddha went every day to preach in monasteries and explain texts. He rode an old elephant which, while the religious exercises of his master lasted, knelt devoutly, listening before the temple gate. The old Living Buddha loved all animals with effusion, and especially his faithful elephant. When the elephant died, the Living Buddha made it reincarnate in a strong boy belonging to a poor family. The heavy boy had the exact gait of an elephant, a big, oval long head, unusually long nose and ears, and an appetite as voracious as that of an elephant. No room was left for doubt; the elephant had reincarnated in a human being. The boy, at the age of seven, became the beloved apprentice of the old Living Buddha. After a few years, the master and his apprentice died at the same time. The reincarnation of the holy man was found in a boy endowed with the same characteristics as an elephant, but in addition he had on the palms of both hands and the soles of his feet the marks of the Buddhist "wheel of life," the characteristic of Living Buddhas. This boy was the genuine incarnation of the holy man who had loved the elephant to such an extent. The new Buddha became as celebrated over all India for his elephant features as for his universal charity, which extended not only to human beings, but even to all animals.

Also in India, a holy lama, very fond of animals, squatted under a tree from dawn to dusk, year after

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year, devoutly reciting sacred texts, and only a lovely 539
pigeon, perching on the lowest branch of the tree, was listening and enjoying the reading of the holy books, during all these years. The holy man loved the pigeon ardently and fed it every day. The pigeon died, and was reincarnated in a boy born into a poor family in the mountains, and on the very day of his birth he asked distinctly, three times, "Where is my master so-and-so?" The fact spread all over the country like a prairie fire; everybody came to look at the wonderful boy whose fingers and toes were webbed, whose hands were unusually beautiful and fine. As the boy grew he walked as upright as a pole, always his right foot first. Nobody had ever seen such a handsome, intelligent boy. Then the parents were told, by lamas, that the boy was the incarnation of the lovely pigeon, which during years had enjoyed the reading of the texts of the holy man whose name he pronounced three times at the very moment of birth. The boy became a celebrated learned lama, endowed with universal charity for animals. The congregation enjoyed the moralistic conclusion: be kind to animals, because Buddha loves such persons and blesses their families; their merits will be turned into more joy in paradise and the rebirth will be more happy and outstanding.

In Tibet, on the summit of a mountain, there lived in a cave a holy hermit, always praying in order that the animals might be happy, and preaching the love of animals. In his cave hung the picture of a Buddha, painted in a wonderful landscape, wherein a couple of cows grazed in a meadow. The holy man, practicing severe penance, received from the people some flour and tea leaves, and always he drank tea without milk or butter (which is one of the most tremendous kinds of penance for Tibetans). Once Buddha, delighted with the behavior of the holy hermit, suggested that he approach the picture hanging on the wall, and gave him the power to milk both the cows that were there depicted, and from that time on the holy man got milk in his tea. So great is the love of Buddha for those who love animals.

Another topic of the lectures concerned the necessity 538 ●
of performing acts of charity, giving alms to the poor, and especially to the lamas, in order to get remission of sins and an easy entrance into paradise. The merits of good acts performed in behalf of holy lamas, Living Buddhas, and lamaseries are more important and valuable than those performed for less holy men, because lamas are the beloved of Buddha, and the good old Li supported his assumption by a lot of savory examples.

A certain old lama was the beloved of Buddha to such 539
an extent that several times, when he was praying in the temple, the lamas saw all the statues opening their eyes, moving their heads, and smiling wonderfully at him. Another was so holy that once, as he said his Om Mani over his beads, they became red hot from the glow of his love, and melted away. Another holy lama was preaching in a wealthy village. The chief of the

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village started ridiculing and deprecating him. Buddha could not stand this, and made five tongues protrude out of the chief's mouth and made him fall dead on the spot, after which the village became a barren waste. 539

Another of the Living Buddha's topics, several times repeated to me, was that all the Monguor and Tibetan tribes would disappear, many families already being without male issue. The reason, he said, is that nearly all the departed already dwell in paradise and wait there for us, so that now the faster Monguors and Tibetans disappear, the sooner paradise will be furnished with happy inhabitants. "Make your sons become lamas," he would say, "for lamas surely arrive in paradise. However, among the dying, only those who, at the very moment of their death, trust in Buddha may hope to be reborn in a lotus near Buddha, where for thousands of years they will be happy, and where all the inhabitants will be taller and stronger and more beautiful than we are here."

Such are the topics of most of the preaching during the fast exercises. Many times the fasters repeated that they loved the old Li because after every preaching he made them crave for pardon for all their sins, and because he could say the Om Manis over his beads with a wonderful unction. He had touched the hearts of the people. 538

IMPACT OF THE FASTING RITES UPON MONGUOR SOCIETY

Although these exercises were only attended by a relatively small number of older people, their impact upon the families cannot be overestimated, because the old people repeated at home the topics of the lectures and the anecdotes, and because, since the authority with which the old people are vested in a patriarchal society is supreme, they cultivated in the orbit of the family the sense of religiosity; the habit of praying and of craving for pardon. Chiefs, and elders of villages who had attended the meetings, unconsciously and unwittingly were guided by these principles in the administration of the village and in the patching up of troubles. The impact was all the more important because, year after year, the exercises were repeated by the adored old Li, a man with an illustrious pedigree, a scion of the noble and wealthy family of the Li T'u-ssu. The old Li was a personality who provoked a revival of religious feeling in the country. 771 785 869

The anecdotes, ingenuously narrated in the schools by the children, had led me to make inquiries among the fasters themselves about the fast exercises, which before had seemed to me to be an unimportant institution, attended by old women without any bearing on the religious life of the communities. However, taking account of the overall number of the yearly participants in the six centers, and the number of men who attended them, even chiefs of villages and elders, and of the fact that in a patriarchal society the old people wield a supreme influence and also of the strong personality of

[p. 136 (B)]